GAME BASED ON SPEED OF PLAY

5   The present application claims the benefit of priority of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/451,573, filed March 4, 2003, entitled "METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR DIRECTING A GAME IN ACCORDANCE WITH SPEED OF PLAY", the entirety of which is incorporated by reference herein.

10   The present applications is a continuation-in-part of co-pending U.S. patent application serial no. 09/783,251, entitled "METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR DIRECTING A GAME IN ACCORDANCE WITH SPEED OF PLAY", filed February 14, 2001. The entirety of this application is incorporated by reference herein.

15 **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

        The present invention relates to amusement devices, and more specifically to electronic chance devices.

        Casinos and other entities that derive revenue from gaming devices, such as slot machines, video poker machines and video blackjack machines,

20 attempt to maximize revenue. Gaming devices generate revenue in accordance with the following equation:

$$\text{REVENUE} = (\text{HOUSE EDGE}) \times (\text{HOURS PLAYED}) \times (\text{PLAYS} / \text{HOUR})$$

25   Of the above three variables, two, Hours Played and Plays / Hour, are directly controlled by the player, and are thus difficult for a casino to change. The third, House Edge, is directly controlled by a casino but is nonetheless difficult to change for regulatory reasons. In addition, increasing House Edge can affect other variables to actually decrease revenue, as is described below.

30   Players are primarily concerned with finding a gaming device with a low "House Edge", also known as "hold percentage" (average percentage of wagered money which is kept by the gaming device per game). Equivalently,

players are primarily concerned with finding a gaming device with a high "payout percentage" (100% less House Edge, which equals the average percentage of wagered money which is returned to a player per game). Low hold percentages (high payout percentages) are a significant factor in attracting players to one casino

5   rather than another. Accordingly, many casinos advertise that they have gaming devices with very high payout percentages.

Although a high payout percentage (low House Edge) may attract players, it also results in lower revenue. Casinos, of course, would prefer higher revenue, and may increase the House Edge to increase revenue. Paradoxically,

10   increasing the House Edge does not always increase revenue. The House Edges of gaming devices are often displayed in publications or on the gaming device itself. Many players will avoid gaming devices that they believe to have low payout percentages, or high House Edges. Thus, if the House Edge is increased on certain gaming devices, the Hours Played or Plays / Hour on those gaming devices may

15   decrease, and revenues may likewise decrease.

In addition, when a casino wants to adjust the hold percentage of a slot machine, state and/or local regulations may require that the machine be removed from the casino floor, adjusted accordingly, then reactivated. Accordingly, some casinos may be reluctant to increase the House Edge of gaming

20   devices in an attempt to increase revenues from those devices.

Increasing the Hours Played is difficult or impossible because a casino cannot easily modify player behavior. Casinos typically remove clocks from the view of players, make the seats and playing area more comfortable and serve free drinks in an attempt to modify player behavior. Additionally, the

25   gaming devices themselves have become increasingly more entertaining in order to entice the player to play longer. Such measures may, at best, indirectly increase the Hours Played, but do not necessarily increase the Hours Played significantly or at all.

Increasing the Plays / Hour (speed of game play) is likewise

30   difficult or impossible. Efforts to increase this factor include providing a spin button, rather than a handle, on some slot machines, allowing the player to initiate each game quickly. In addition, some slot machines have faster stopping reels,

which end each game more quickly. Furthermore, a group of gaming machines may be in communication over a network, allowing each of a group of players to influence the movement of an object in a race, such as a horse race or car race. Such a racing game may make some players play faster than they would have.

5 However, other players view such a game as annoyingly complicated and do not participate.

Casinos may also sponsor tournaments, in which the first player to win a jackpot or reach a certain score wins a prize. Casinos may also organize player clubs, in which players receive points for the number of plays or amounts

10 wagered. Such points can be redeemed for goods and services once the player has reached a certain threshold. Casinos may also offer players the chance to win a "progressive jackpot", which increases over time and is typically available to all players in a casino playing slot machines. When a progressive jackpot reaches a large dollar amount, players typically play rapidly in an attempt to win that

15 jackpot. Since each player knows that all other players have a chance to win, they play faster in an attempt to increase their chances of winning the jackpot. However, other players are not attracted by such casino promotions, and their playing behavior is thus unaffected by the promotions.

In summary, it would be advantageous to increase a player's

20 attraction to a gaming device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a schematic illustration of an electronic gaming device provided in accordance with the present invention.

25 FIG. 2 is a schematic illustration of a plurality of gaming devices which are in communication with a network server.

FIG. 3 is a diagrammatic representation of a set of elements of a slot machine-type game, and arrangement of those elements in a slot machine-type game.

30 FIG. 4 is a schematic illustration of an outcome probabilities database of the electronic gaming device of FIG. 1.

FIG. 5 is a schematic illustration of an exemplary payout table of the electronic gaming device of FIG. 1.

FIG. 6 is a flowchart illustrating a process for directing a game in accordance with the present invention.

5   FIG. 7 is a schematic illustration of a selection table and payout tables of the electronic gaming device of FIG. 1.

FIGS. 8A, 8B and 8C are schematic illustrations of the payout tables of FIG. 7.

FIG. 9 is a schematic illustration of another embodiment of a

10   selection table of the electronic gaming device of FIG. 1.

FIGS. 10A, 10B and 10C are schematic illustrations of payout tables calculated in accordance with the selection table of FIG. 9.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

15   Applicants have recognized that it is possible to increase the speed of play (Plays / Hour) of a gaming device significantly, and thereby significantly increase the revenue. Players typically do not consider the speed of play, but instead attempt to find a gaming device with a low House Edge. Accordingly, a gaming device that is played rapidly will not discourage players, and can thus

20   generate more revenue by providing an incentive to play faster and for longer periods of time. Such a gaming device may generate so much revenue that the higher payout percentage will be offset.

By offering an incentive to play faster, a gaming device will typically be played more often over time than those devices that do not provide

25   such an incentive. The casino can in turn derive greater revenue from the gaming device, even though the player is afforded a higher payout percentage.

In jurisdictions which require a gaming device to be monitored, the gaming device could maintain an audit trail for later review by regulators. Thus, the gaming device could automatically adjust the hold percentages as desired while

30   conforming to regulatory requirements. .

As will be understood by those skilled in the art, the drawings and accompanying descriptions presented herein are exemplary arrangements for

stored representations of information. A number of other arrangements may be employed besides the tables shown. Similarly, the illustrated entries represent exemplary information, but those skilled in the art will understand that the number and content of the entries can be different from those illustrated herein.

5   Referring to FIG. 1, a gaming device 10 comprises a processor 12, such as one or more conventional microprocessors, which is in communication with a data storage device 14, such as an appropriate combination of magnetic, optical and/or semiconductor memory. The processor 12 and the storage device 14 may each be (i) located entirely within a single computer or other computing

10   device; (ii) connected to each other by a remote communication link, such as a serial port cable, telephone line or radio frequency transceiver; or (iii) a combination thereof. For example, the gaming device 10 may comprise one or more computers which are connected to a remote server computer for maintaining databases.

15   The processor 12 is further in communication with a display 16 and player input devices 18. The display 16 is a graphical display device, such as a video monitor of a type used in conventional electronic gaming devices, for displaying images generated by the processor 12 during a game. Such images are described below. The display 16 need not be included in certain types of gaming

20   devices, such as purely mechanical slot machines. The player input devices 18 include input devices well known in the art, such as a touch screen for generating a signal indicative of a location on the touch screen that is touched or pressed by a player, and/or buttons which indicate player commands and selections when actuated. Other input devices will be understood by those skilled in the art.

25   The processor 12 is further in communication with a coin acceptor 20 for generating a signal indicative of the number of coins inserted and their type. The coin acceptor 20 thereby allows the processor 12 to determine an amount of funds which are deposited by a player and retained in a coin reservoir (not shown). A hopper 22 for dispensing coins from the coin reservoir (not shown) is in

30   communication with the processor 12. When the player requests to "cash out" (receive all funds he is due), the processor determines if the player is due any funds

("credit"). If so, the processor 12 directs the hopper 22 to release an appropriate number and type of coins in a known manner.

The processor 12 is further in communication with a card reader 24 for reading information stored on a player tracking card (not shown). Such a

5   player tracking card may be magnetically encoded with data representing an amount of funds, and/or with data representing a player identifier, such as a player name or account number. Accordingly, a player may use a player tracking card instead of inserting coins into and receiving coins from the gaming device 10. The player identifier can be used in accessing other player-related information stored

10   on a network server or other remote device. Thus, the card reader 24 also allows the processor 12 to receive and transmit player-related information. The card reader 24 may also include a display for displaying the value of funds stored in association with a player tracking card, thereby informing the player of an amount of funds available.

15   A clock 26 in communication with the processor 12 generates signals that indicate time. Thus, the processor 12 may ascertain the time of day or the time that has elapsed between two events.

The storage device 14 stores (i) a program 28 for controlling the processor 12; (ii) an outcome probabilities database 30 for indicating probabilities

20   of game outcomes; and (iii) one or more payout tables 32 for indicating payouts (funds won) for game outcomes. The processor 12 performs instructions of the program 28, thereby operating in accordance with the present invention, and particularly in accordance with the methods described in detail herein. For example, the program 28 stores data indicative of game rules and elements. The

25   program 28 furthermore includes program elements that may be necessary, such as an operating system and "device drivers" for allowing the processor to interface with computer peripheral devices, such as the hopper 22 and the card reader 24. Appropriate device drivers and other necessary program elements are known to those skilled in the art, and need not be described in detail herein.

30   In the above-described embodiment, the gaming device 10 is an electronic or electro-mechanical device similar to those used in casinos. As such, the gaming device 10 would include typical components such as the coin acceptor

20, the hopper 22 and/or the card reader 24. In another embodiment, the gaming device 10 may be implemented as software that directs one or more computers, such as conventional personal computers based on Intel Pentium® microprocessors. Furthermore, such software implementations of the gaming

5 device 10 may be operative to implement gaming over networks, such the Internet.

Referring to FIG. 2, each of gaming devices 40, 42, 44 and 46 is in communication with a network 48, and is thereby in communication with a network server 50. Communication with the network server 50 allows each gaming device to access player-related information stored on the network server.

10 Those skilled in the art will understand that many types of player-related information may be stored, such as funds and predefined game preferences. Those skilled in the art will also understand that many types of gaming devices may operate in communication with a network server, while many others may operate without any such communication to another device.

15 Referring to FIG. 3, a set 60 of elements includes all possible elements of a slot machine-type game. The set 60 includes a cherries element 62, a bell element 64, a bar element 66, an orange element 68, a plum element 70 and a seven element 72. During such a game, the device randomly selects one element from each of a plurality of reels, yielding a subset of elements that defines the

20 outcome for that game. For example, one possible subset is a bar element, a plum element and a bell element. Another possible subset is an orange element and two cherry elements.

For each reel in a slot machine-type game, the selected element is one of twenty-two equally likely choices, each choice being one of the set 60 of all

25 possible elements. For example, a plurality 74 of reels includes reels 76, 78 and 80, and the player is randomly provided with an element chosen from each of the reels 76, 78 and 80, thereby yielding a subset that consists of three elements. The three elements define the outcome, and therefore a payout.

It is noted that the number of choices is greater than the number of

30 elements. For example, although there are six elements 62, 64, 66, 68, 70 and 72, there are twenty-two choices on each reel, and therefore there are 10,648 possible arrangements of elements for each game (22 x 22 x 22 = 10,648).

Referring to FIG. 4, the outcome probabilities database 30 of FIG. 1 is shown in detail. Each row of the depicted database represents a database entry, and each entry defines a probability of an outcome occurring. In particular, each entry includes an outcome description 100 which describes the outcome, and a

5   number of arrangements of elements 102 which indicates the number of arrangements of elements which yield the outcome. For example, the entry 110, corresponding to the outcome "orange/orange/orange", indicates that there are forty-two arrangements of elements which yield the outcome "orange/orange/orange". This is because, as shown in FIG. 3, the reel 76 has two

10   orange elements, the reel 78 has three orange elements and the reel 80 has seven orange elements (2 x 3 x 7 = 42). Similarly, the entry 112, corresponding to the outcome "bar/bell/bell", indicates that there are four arrangements of elements which yield the outcome "bar/bell/bell." This is because, as shown in FIG. 3, the reel 76 has two bar elements, the reel 78 has two bell elements and the reel 80 has

15   one bell element (2 x 2 x 1 = 4).

Each entry of the outcome probabilities database 30 further includes a probability 104 which indicates the probability during each game of the outcome occurring. For example, the entry 110, corresponding to the outcome "orange/orange/orange", indicates that there is a probability of 0.394% of the

20   outcome "orange/orange/orange" occurring. This is because, as discussed above, there are forty-two arrangements of elements which yield the outcome "orange/orange/orange", and there are 10,648 possible arrangements of elements (42 / 10,648 = 0.00394 = 0.394%). Similarly, the entry 112, corresponding to the outcome "bar/bell/bell ", indicates that there is a probability of 0.038% of the

25   outcome "bar/bell/bell " occurring. This is because, as discussed above, there are four arrangements of elements which yield the outcome "bar/bell/bell ", and there are 10,648 possible arrangements of elements (4 / 10,648 = 0.00038 = 0.038%).

Each entry further includes a random number range 106 which indicates a range of random numbers that correspond to an occurrence of the

30   outcome. For example, in the embodiment illustrated by FIG. 4 a random integer from 1 to 10,648 is selected for each game. Accordingly, each integer from 1 to 10,648 corresponds to one of the entries of the outcome probabilities database 30.

The random number range 106 for each entry is selected in accordance with the corresponding probability 104. For example, the entry 110 indicates that a randomly selected integer which is from 10,467 to 10,508 corresponds to the outcome "orange/orange/orange". Since the range from 10,467 to 10,508 consists

5   of forty-two integers, and the randomly selected integer may be from 1 to 10,648, the probability of the outcome "orange/orange/orange" occurring is 0.394% (42 / 10,648 = 0.00394 = 0.394%).

Referring to FIG. 5, an exemplary payout table 120 of the payout tables 32 (FIG. 1) is illustrated. Each row of the payout table 120 indicates a

10   payout for an outcome. The payout table 120 thus defines a possible pay schedule for a game. As described below, the actual pay schedule of a game may vary over time, and may correspond to any of a number of payout tables. A pay schedule as used herein indicates the payouts actually provided for outcomes of a game.

Each entry of the payout table 120 includes (i) an outcome

15   description 122 that describes the outcome; (ii) a payout 124 that indicates the number of coins awarded to the player when the outcome occurs, in which the payout 124 is for each coin the player wagers (e.g. payout of four indicates four coins awarded for every coins wagered); (iii) a probability 126 which indicates the probability during each game of the outcome occurring; and (iv) an expected

20   payout 128 which indicates the average number of coins awarded for each game that are due to the outcome. As is known in the art, the expected payout 128 is an "expected value" which is equal to the sum of all products of each payout multiplied by the corresponding probability of the payout occurring. It is noted that the sum of all expected payouts shown in the payout table 120 is

25   approximately 0.954, and as is known the payout percentage is defined as the sum of all expected payouts expressed as a percentage. Thus, the payout percentage of a gaming device operating according to the payout table 120 is approximately 95.4%. Equivalently, the hold percentage, or House Edge, is approximately 4.6%.

Referring to FIG. 6, a process 150 initiates with the payer indicating

30   a wager amount for a game (step 152) and starting the game (step 154). The gaming device 10 (FIG. 1) calculates a speed of game play, as is described below, in any of a number of manners (step 156). Based on the calculated speed of game

play, the gaming device determines a pay schedule (step 158). The player is then provided with a payout in accordance with the determined pay schedule (step 160).

The step 156 of calculating a speed of game play may comprise measuring a number of games played in a predetermined time period, measuring a

5   time elapsed between games, or measuring a time elapsed between other events. The clock 26 (FIG. 1) of the gaming device 10 (FIG. 1) may be used to measure a time period and a time elapsed. Such measurements may be initiated upon the start of a game. For example, the clock 26 may measure a time elapsed between consecutive games of a series of games. Similarly the clock 26 may measure a

10   number of games played in a time period that begins upon the start of a game. In other embodiments, measurements may be initiated after a predetermined delay, which may be measured in units of time, number of games or a combination thereof. For example, the speed of game play may be measured as the number of games played within a five minute period, in which the five minute period begins

15   after thirty seconds of a first game being initiated. Alternatively, the speed of game play may be measured as the number of games played within a five minute period, in which the five minute period begins after fifteen games are played within a ninety second time period.

Once the speed of game play is calculated, the gaming device

20   determines a pay schedule based on the calculated speed of game play. In general, a pay schedule may be determined by (i) selecting a payout table from a plurality of payout tables based on the speed of game play, or (ii) multiplying the payout values of a payout table by a multiplier that is based on the speed of game play.

Referring to FIG. 7, a selection table 180 for selecting a payout

25   table from a plurality of payout tables based on the speed of game play is illustrated. Those skilled in the art will understand that the selection table 180 may be implemented as a database stored in the storage device 14 (FIG. 1), may be implemented by process steps defined by the program 28 (FIG. 1), or a combination thereof. The selection table 180 includes entries 182, 184 and 186,

30   each of which indicates a payout table to select upon calculating a speed of game play. Each of the entries 182, 184 and 186 includes (i) a speed identifier 188 for uniquely identifying the entry; (ii) a speed of play 190 range; and (iii) a selected

payout table 192 for indicating which of a plurality of payout tables is to be the pay schedule for a game. In the example illustrated by FIG. 7, the selected payout table 192 may indicate one of three payout tables 200, 210 and 220, which are named "standard", "enhanced" and "superior", respectively, for reference purposes.

5   For example, if the speed of game play is calculated to be six games per minute, then the entry 184 indicates that the enhanced payout table 210 is to be the pay schedule. Those skilled in the art will understand that the selection table 180 may include any number of payout tables and/or entries.

Referring to FIGS. 8A, 8B and 8C, the payout tables 200, 210 and

10   220 are illustrated in detail. Each of the payout tables 200, 210 and 220 indicates similar payouts for the various outcomes except the payout for the "seven/seven/seven" outcome. The entry 202 defines the payout for that outcome to be one hundred, the entry 212 defines the payout to be one hundred fifty and the entry 222 defines the payout to be two hundred. Accordingly, the payout table 220

15   defines a payout percentage which is higher than that of the payout table 210. Similarly, the payout table 210 defines a payout percentage which is higher than that of the payout table 200. However, as described above, the higher speed of play can compensate for the higher payout percentages (lower hold percentages). As indicated by Table 1, the revenue derived from the gaming device can actually

20   be higher even when the hold percentage is lower.

	STANDARD	ENHANCED	SUPERIOR
Payout Percentage	95.4%	95.8%	96.3%
Hold Percentage	4.6%	4.2%	3.7%
Minimum Plays per Minute	1	4	9
Maximum Plays per Minute	3	8	-
Minimum Average Revenue per Minute	0.046	0.167	0.333
Maximum Average Revenue per Minute	0.139	0.334	-

TABLE 1 – Revenue Calculations for Selection Table 180

In Table 1, minimum and maximum average revenue per minute are calculated by multiplying the hold percentage with the minimum and maximum plays per minute, respectively. In addition, the listed values for revenue are in proportion to the amount wagered. For example, the maximum average revenue

5 per minute of 0.046 indicates a revenue per minute of 4.6 cents for games in which a dollar (100 cents) is wagered.

As noted above, in the example illustrated by FIGS. 8A, 8B and 8C, each of the payout tables 200, 210 and 220 indicates similar payouts for the various outcomes except the payout for the "seven/seven/seven" outcome. However, those

10 skilled in the art will understand that the plurality of payout tables may indicate similar or vastly dissimilar payouts, and likewise may indicate equal or unequal payout percentages. Typically, payout percentage will be higher for payout tables which are selected for higher speeds of game play, and the revenue per time period will typically be higher for higher speeds of game play. It can be especially

15 advantageous to increase only the payout for unlikely outcomes, such as the outcome having the highest payout (e.g. a "jackpot" outcome). Even doubling the payout of an extremely unlikely event can attract players while also resulting in a payout percentage that is still acceptable to a casino.

FIG. 9 illustrates a selection table 250 for determining a pay

20 schedule by multiplying the payout values of a predetermined payout table ("base payout table") by a multiplier that is based on the speed of game play. Those skilled in the art will understand that the selection table 250 may be implemented as a database stored in the storage device 14 (FIG. 1), may be implemented by process steps defined by the program 28 (FIG. 1), or a combination thereof. The

25 selection table 250 includes entries 252, 254 and 256, each of which indicates a multiplier that is based on a speed of game play. Each of the entries 252, 254 and 256 includes (i) a speed identifier 258 for uniquely identifying the entry; (ii) a speed of play 260 range; and (iii) a multiplier 262 for indicating an amount by which to multiply the payout values of the base payout table. Since a payout

30 (number of coins won per coin wagered) is typically an integer, a product of the multiplier and a payout may be rounded down to the highest integer value. For example, for a multiplier 1.04 and a payout 20, the product is 1.04 x 20 = 20.8,

which rounds down to 20. In many cases, this rounding down will result in an unchanged payout.

The speed of play thus indicates a multiplier. For example, if the speed of game play is calculated to be nine games per minute, then the entry 256 indicates that the multiplier is 1.04. Those skilled in the art will understand that any number of multipliers and/or entries in the selection table 250 may be used.

Referring to FIGS. 10A, 10B and 10C, payout tables 280, 290 and 300 are illustrated in detail. The payout tables 280, 290 and 300 correspond to the multipliers of FIG. 9 applied to a base payout table, which is equal to the payout table 120 of FIG. 5. The payout table 280 corresponds to the speed of play indicated by the entry 252, and thus to a multiplier of 1.00. Thus, the payout table 280 indicates the same payouts as the base payout table. The payout tables 290 and 300 correspond to the speeds of play indicated by the entries 254 and 256, respectively, and thus to multipliers of 1.02 and 1.04, respectively. Accordingly, the payout table 300 defines a payout percentage which is higher than that of the payout table 290. Similarly, the payout table 290 defines a payout percentage which is higher than that of the payout table 280. However, as indicated by Table 2, the revenue derived from the gaming device can actually be higher even when the hold percentage is lower.

	TABLE 280	TABLE 290	TABLE 300
Payout Percentage	95.4%	95.6%	96.0%
Hold Percentage	4.6%	4.4%	4.0%
Minimum Plays per Minute	1	4	9
Maximum Plays per Minute	3	8	-
Minimum Average Revenue per Minute	0.046	0.177	0.362
Maximum Average Revenue per Minute	0.139	0.355	-

TABLE 2 – Revenue Calculations for Selection Table 250

Although the present invention has been described with respect to a preferred embodiment thereof, those skilled in the art will note that various substitutions may be made to those embodiments described herein without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. For example, although a slot machine-type game has been described, the present invention is likewise applicable to other types of games, such as video poker, video blackjack and video roulette.

Racing Game Embodiments

Various embodiments are contemplated in which slot machines are configured to facilitate games with racing themes, such as races involving automobiles, horses, runners or other racing objects.

According to some racing embodiments, players are rewarded in accordance with their average speed of play. In some average speed racing embodiments, the average speed of play can be calculated in a manner similar to that which is disclosed with reference to step 156 of Figure 6, such as by measuring the number of games played in a predetermined period of time. In such embodiments, payouts may be awarded as described with reference to the pay schedule table of Figure 9.

In other average speed embodiments, a "virtual average speed" can be calculated based on an average of point values associated with different symbols

on the slot machine's reels. Thus, a racing game may reward players based on their virtual average speed as determined by an average of the value of symbols occurring on the reels over a given amount of time or over a given number of outcomes (i.e. "spins").

5   For example, a NASCAR® themed slot machine game may require that players pre-purchase twenty five spins for twenty credits. The sale of twenty-five spins for twenty credits could be marketed to players as the sale and purchase of one "lap" around a racetrack. Upon commencement of the game by the commitment (i.e. deposit) of twenty credits, the player may initiate individual

10   outcomes by, for example, pulling on the slot machine's handle. Individual outcomes may not by themselves directly lead to payouts, but may result in additions or subtractions to a running subtotal of point values. For example, an initial spin may yield the individual reel symbols of "+10 mph", "+15 mph" and "+5 mph", for a total of 30 mph (or points). A second spin may yield such

15   symbols as "+20 mph", "+15 mph" and "+5 mph", for a per-spin total of 40 mph, and a running subtotal total of 70 mph (i.e. 30 mph from the first spin plus 40 mph from the second spin). Indeed, certain symbols or outcomes may result in a negative effect on a player's running count. For example, a rain symbol occurring on the payline of the slot machine may function to deduct 10 mph from the

20   player's running count. Or, a flat tire symbol occurring on the payline may deduct 25 mph from the player's running count. Throughout the twenty five spin period, the racetrack and the player's progress around the racetrack could be as represented on a visual display, where a car associated with the player may advance 1/25 of the racetrack's length after every spin.

25   At the end of the 25 spin period, the player may be awarded a payout based on his or her (1) finishing speed (i.e. the final sum of reel symbol values that occurred during the 25 spin period), and/or (2) virtual average speed (i.e. the average of the reel symbols values that occurred during the 25 spin period.

Systems and methods for rewarding players of racing-themed games based

30   on the aggregate value of symbols occurring over a plurality of gaming events is described in co-pending Utility Patent Application Serial Number [NOT YET ASSIGNED] (Attorney Docket No. 03-008), entitled "ELECTRONIC

AMUSEMENT DEVICE AND METHOD FOR ENHANCED SLOT MACHINE PLAY", filed February 5, 2004; and in co-pending Utility Patent Application Serial Number [NOT YET ASSIGNED] (Attorney Docket No. 03-008A), entitled "METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ENHANCED PLAY OF A GAMING

5   DEVICE", filed February 13, 2004. These applications are incorporated by reference herein for all purposes.